

OUR EDUCATION PROBLEM

An address given by the
Hon. Lucien Maynard, K.C., Attorney General
to the Legislative Assembly
on Friday, March 14th, 1947.

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Mr. Speaker:

I have listened to all the speeches made to date in this debate by Honourable members of the opposition. The one common characteristic of all these speeches is criticism of the government for failure to pay 50% of the cost of education in Alberta. This criticism, as a matter of fact, is only a repetition of the request made by the Alberta Educational Council and others that the Government should increase its grants for education to the extent necessary to pay 50% of the cost of education in Alberta.

NATURE OF PROBLEM:

What is the basis of the request?

I have listened in vain for an analysis of the cause of the present difficulties facing education. Even the Alberta Educational Council has been satisfied simply to review the difficulties facing education, calling attention to a log school here, or homemade desks there. It has failed to present an analysis of the causes of these difficulties. It would appear from the statements made in the Assembly and from the literature circulated by the Alberta Educational Council that these difficulties would immediately be solved by the payment of 50% of the cost of education by the government. But how can anyone seriously prescribe a remedy without first diagnosing the causes of the ailment? It is futile to suggest that payment by the Government of 50% of the cost of education will be a cure-all for the present educational problems in Alberta when it is obvious to those who give serious thought to the problem that this recommendation fails to take into consideration the many factors involved in the educational problems of this Province.

The only reason I have been able to ascertain for the request that the government should pay the arbitrary figure of 50% for the cost of education is two-fold:

First, general dissatisfaction with the present situation:

In a circular letter dated January 22, 1947, the Alberta Educational Council has stated the case as follows:

"You will no doubt remember that a year ago the delegates from 15 Province-wide organizations met in Edmonton to demonstrate their grave concern at the low level to which our educational system had descended. This conference unanimously agreed to ask the Government, with the broader basis of taxation at its command, to meet 50% of the cost of elementary and secondary education.

The situation has become progressively more serious in the ensuing year. Teachers are extremely dissatisfied, schools are being closed, over 15,000 children are having to get along with a "mail-box" education, and the people recognize that taxation of land and houses has reached its limit. Should we be unfortunate enough to suffer poor climatic conditions, and should crops fail, our educational system would drop to an even lower ebb."

Second, it is argued that the Provinces of Ontario and British Columbia are paying 50% of the cost of education in their respective provinces, even the Government in Great

Britain is doing so, consequently, the Government of Alberta should be able to do the same.

In order to assess properly the merits and weaknesses of these two contentions, it is necessary to study the problem in some detail:

This I propose to do by dividing the question in three parts:

First: I wish to present an analysis of the difficulties and the problems facing education in Alberta to-day.

Second: It will be necessary to make comparison of what Alberta is doing for education in the light of its public finances with that of some of the other provinces.

Third: I propose to discuss the Government's financial programme for education in the light of its other public expenditures.

I submit that only with a proper understanding of the nature of the problem and all its ramifications as well as a proper understanding of all the factors involved and the results flowing therefrom, can any group of people arrive at an intelligent decision on the adequate remedies to solve the various problems.

PART I

The first question that comes to my mind, is why the figure 50%? Why not 45%? Why not 60%? To what is this figure 50% related?

BASIS OF 50% REQUEST:

Should the Government see fit to increase this year's grants for education to the extent necessary to pay 50% of the cost of education, what use will be made by the school divisions of these grants? What use, in fact, will be made of the additional \$1,500,000 provided for grants in this year's budget? Will school divisions use the increased grant to lower requisitions, thus easing the burden of taxation on land? Or will the school divisions use the increased grant to increase teachers' salaries and other school expenditures?

It may be claimed that it is immaterial how the school divisions will use—or would use—these additional grants. But this is fundamental. It is a question that goes to the very root of the problem. For instance, if the object of requesting the Provincial Government to pay 50% of the cost of education is to ease the burden of land tax, then this object would not be accomplished if the additional funds provided by grants were used to increase teachers' salaries, provide for the construction of schools and teacherages. It is obvious that if this were done the cost of education would again take a jump, and the Government would again be faced with the demand to increase its grants still further in order to pay 50% of this additional cost. Thus we would find ourselves in a vicious circle; increasing grants in order to pay a greater share of the cost of education, which would automatically go up every time grants would be increased.

If the object of the request however is really to ease the burden of land tax, then the government has already accomplished this by cancelling this year the .3 mill Social Service tax imposed on all land in the Province, thus in effect providing the municipalities with an additional source of revenue for education or for other purposes.

INCREASED COST OF EDUCATION:

There is no assurance that the cost of education is static, on the contrary, everything tends to show that teachers' salaries will be increased further, thus increasing still more the cost of education. If real estate is only able to provide half the cost of education at its present level, what will the situation be when the cost of education, by reason of increased salaries and other factors, will have far exceeded twice this amount? Is it not natural to assume that when that situation arises, the demand will be made that the Government should pay, not only 50% of the cost of Education, but 60%, 70% and even 80% if the cost should become prohibitive? Thus the question that should be determined is, what amount can properly be fixed as the cost of education in this Province, taking into consideration the general economy of the Province? What portion of the cost should be charged to land, and what portion should be paid by the Provincial Government? No definite answer can of course be given because we are still in an expanding economy. Our population will undoubtedly increase considerably in the future. The increased development of our natural resources will undoubtedly produce greater wealth and greater public revenues. Consequently any figures used for this purpose would be purely speculative, just like the figure of 50% used by the Alberta Educational Council.

GOVERNMENT CONTRIBUTION TO EDUCATION SINCE 1936:

Let me illustrate. In 1936, the total cost of education in the Province of Alberta, was only \$9,119,641.00. School grants that year amounted to \$1,134,275.00 or 12% of the total cost. In order to meet half the cost of education in 1936 the Government would have been required to pay school grants amounting to \$4,559,820.00. As a matter of fact the total amount of grants provided **this year** is \$5,200,000.00 This amount represents **more** than 50% of the cost of education in 1936, but only approximately $\frac{1}{3}$ of the total cost of education in 1947. The explanation, of course, is due to the fact that the cost of education has increased. Teachers' salaries have increased—and properly so. Since capital expenditures have increased, it is only normal, that the government contribution to help meet these costs should also be increased.

The Honourable members may not know to what extent the Government has increased its contribution to education since 1936. It might be well if I repeated here the information contained in a recent statement issued by my colleague Honourable Mr. Ansley, Minister of Education. This statement shows the sources of school revenues from 1936. Here is the information:

SOURCE OF SCHOOL REVENUES

Year	Cost of Operation	Grants	Division of Costs	
			Provincial Grants	Local Taxes
1936	\$ 9,119,641	\$ 1,134,275	12%	85%
1938	9,481,590	1,663,766	18%	82%
1941	10,293,506	2,163,114	21%	79%
1944	11,155,097	2,717,699	24%	76%
1946	14,252,199	3,700,000	26%	74%

Thus it will be seen that although the cost of education has increased during the past 10 years, the percentage of the cost borne by the Provincial Government has been steadily

increasing while the percentage paid from local taxes has been decreasing.

It is obvious therefore that the percentage of the cost of education paid by the Provincial Government can in no way be blamed for the difficulties facing education in this Province.

It is also fairly obvious that the figure of "50%" is purely arbitrary and is not based on any logical fact or conclusion, and that consequently it cannot be claimed—as the Alberta Educational Council seeks to do—that payment of 50% of the cost of education by the Provincial Government is the "cure-all" for the educational problem.

I repeat, emphatically, that no intelligent cure can be proposed without an understanding of the difficulties facing education. To obtain this understanding it may be well to review the changes in education in Alberta during the past 10 years.

TEACHER TRAINING:

Prior to 1937 the Normal Schools of Alberta accepted candidates for teacher training who possessed either Grade XI or Grade XII standing. The Grade XI students, upon completion of their courses, were granted Second Class Certificates and the Grade XII students First Class Certificates. Both certificates constituted a valid license to teach any grade in any Alberta school.

In 1937 the system of certification in Alberta was changed. Second and First Class certificates were no longer issued and were replaced by the Elementary and Intermediate School Certificate and the High School Certificates. The High School Certificate was issued to graduates of the teacher training programme of the University.

At the same time that the new system of certification was established, entrance to the Normal Schools was limited to candidates who had Grade XII standing. Some of the reasons for this change, involving a raising of standards, were as follows:

1. It was desired to raise the standard of teachers staffing the schools.
2. The new programme of studies just introduced for the elementary school required more competent teachers.
3. **There was a great over-supply of teachers.**

During the period 1937-1945 Normal School graduates all had Grade XII standing though towards the end of that period it became necessary to accept candidates whose academic standing often left much to be desired. These graduates were granted an interim Elementary and Intermediate School Certificate. It required attendance at a summer session to make the certificate permanent.

Furthermore, since the fall of 1945 the Normal Schools have been incorporated into the Faculty of Education of the University of Alberta, thus requiring at least part training at the University to qualify for a permanent teaching certificate.

There are at present two methods of obtaining an Elementary School certificate. There is the standard two-year course. The student enrolling in it does not expect to teach until he has completed two years' training. He presumably is giving some thought to completing at some time two more years of training and obtaining his B.Ed. degree.

The second method is the "one-year" course. At the end of one year the student receives the Junior Elementary and Intermediate School Certificate. This Certificate is valid for two years. Thereafter it is continued in force only so long as the holder is proceeding towards the Senior Elementary and Intermediate School Certificate, which requires the equivalent of a second year of study. This work may be taken at summer sessions and may be begun if desired after the first year of teaching. This Senior Elementary and Intermediate School Certificate when obtained, and subject to acceptable teaching experience, is permanent.

TEACHER SHORTAGE:

These higher qualifications naturally increased the cost to students seeking to become fully qualified teachers. Furthermore, the situation was aggravated by the war. Just as the revised program was hitting its stride, war broke out and the unemployment situation that existed before the war rapidly disappeared to be replaced by a shortage of manpower in all fields of activity—armed services, agricultural employment, war industries as well as industry generally.

This shortage of teachers was not a condition peculiar to Alberta. Even the Alberta Educational Council has called attention to the shortage throughout Canada in its booklet "Your Child Has Only One Childhood". On page 16 we read:

"In 1940 when the Rowell-Sirois commissioners sniffed the battle with such ardour, there were 14,981 men-teachers in the English-speaking part of Canada. In 1945 there were only 9,992. Many of them went into the services and war-industry—there to discover that, man for man, they were as good and as capable as others who had rated two and three times their salary in civil life. Relatively few of them are coming back into teaching."

Furthermore, in a recent broadcast given on February the 18th, the Honourable Mr. Ansley called attention to the statement made by Dr. A. G. Peterson, President of the Montana Normal School during a visit to Edmonton. Dr. Peterson stated that the United States had been short 355,000 teachers since 1939.

Finally, in a news release dated January 13th, 1937, the Canadian Education Association presented figures showing the approximate shortage of qualified teachers in Canada to be 6,447.

The figures by Provinces as given by the Canadian Education Association are as follows:

Province	Approximate Existing Shortage of Fully Qualified Teachers		
	Elementary	Secondary	Total
Prince Edward Island.....	108	Nil	108
Nova Scotia.....	1,000	Nil	1,000
New Brunswick.....	600	Nil	600
Quebec (C.).....	1,300	Nil	1,300
Quebec (P.).....	149	20	169
Ontario.....	802	88	890
Manitoba.....	700	100	800
Saskatchewan.....	600	100	700
Alberta.....	668	52	720
British Columbia.....	120	40	160

In the same news release the Canadian Education Association predicted that the total shortage of teachers in 1949 would be 7,714.

These facts and figures prove beyond any doubt that the teacher shortage is not a condition peculiar to Alberta alone but that the shortage exists in every province of Canada and even in the United States, and consequently bears no relation to whether or not the Government should pay 50% of the cost of education in this province. In the United States, where the salaries of teachers are far higher than in Alberta, they still have a tremendous shortage. Even the provinces of Ontario and British Columbia suffer from a teacher shortage.

TEACHERS' SALARIES:

An attempt is being made to blame the teacher shortage on the low wages paid teachers in Alberta. This is definitely misleading.

Before the war, as far back as the early thirties, there was no teacher shortage in the province— or in Canada. On the contrary there was a teacher surplus. And yet at that time the salaries paid the teachers were far lower than they are to-day. The reports of the Department of Education, filed every year, contain a schedule showing the number of teachers in the province for the particular year involved, together with the average salaries paid teachers in the province. From the reports filed by the Department of Education, I have extracted the following information about salaries paid to teachers.

AVERAGE SALARY OF TEACHERS

	1935-36	1936-37	1937-38	1938-39
In Rural Schools (not included in Divisions).....	\$ 730.74	\$ 752.07	\$ 777.76	\$ 789.46
In Urban Schools.....	1,394.95	1,414.76	1,431.03	1,434.63
In Town Schools.....	1,599.58	1,647.85	1,650.63	1,651.04
				(City, Town)
In Village Schools.....	982.75	1,008.53	1,020.31	1,075.30
In Separate Schools.....	1,062.08	1,063.27	1,118.27	1,095.37
In Consolidated Schools.....	957.79	961.29	1,014.17	1,012.25
In Rural High Schools.....		1,073.86	1,123.81	1,192.61
In Divisions.....			792.41	812.00
In All Schools.....	982.41	1,004.16	1,031.19	1,039.21

1939-40	1940-41	1941-42	1942-43	1943-44	1944-45	1945-46
\$ 784.63	\$ 800.22	\$ 886.18	\$ 914.22	\$1,057.04	\$1,196.25	\$1,284.87
1,435.34	1,440.79	1,486.54	1,509.82	1,595.23	1,679.97	1,802.52
1,662.67	1,666.93	1,691.62	1,695.71	1,756.57	1,841.06	1,983.00
(City, Town)	(City, Town)					
1,075.12	1,079.89	1,154.37	1,209.84	1,319.42	1,417.00	1,503.65
1,095.77	1,112.98	1,160.88	1,200.35	1,362.13	1,288.75	1,342.72
1,017.96	1,016.94	1,074.42	1,198.02	1,279.81	1,359.39	1,520.99
1,221.43	1,194.44	1,305.50				
815.81	838.71	911.65	972.38	1,076.63	1,211.41	1,353.81
1,045.30	1,082.94	1,102.32	1,196.17	1,298.32	1,405.04	1,526.18

Thus it will be seen, that the average teacher's salary in this province has progressively increased from a low of \$730.00 in 1935, to \$1,284.00 last year for teachers in rural schools. The average for all teachers increased from \$932.00 to \$1,526.00. Furthermore, salaries were increased last fall, as the result of negotiations between teachers and school trustees, and this average is even higher now. Salaries will undoubtedly be increased still further as a result of negotiations now being carried on between teachers and school trustees, and the average will again take an upward jump.

How do these salaries in Alberta compare with the salaries in other provinces?

The same news release quoted previously, dated January 13th, 1947 and issued by the Canadian Education Association, gives the following information on page 3, on the median of rural teachers' salaries in Canada:

TEACHERS' SALARIES IN CANADA NOVEMBER, 1946

Province	Rural Median
Prince Edward Island.....	\$ 730.00
Nova Scotia.....	1,100.00
New Brunswick.....	800.00
Quebec (Catholic).....	800.00
Quebec (Protestant).....	800.00
Ontario.....	1,300.00
Manitoba.....	1,200.00
Saskatchewan.....	1,200.00
Alberta.....	1,250.00
British Columbia.....	1,300.00

These figures indicate that only the provinces of Ontario and British Columbia pay a higher Rural Median Salary than the province of Alberta. I will have more to say about these two provinces shortly.

Finally, the members may be interested to know that the bricklaying trade which commands the highest wages of all skilled trades in Alberta, has the greatest shortage of skilled workers of all the skilled trades! Surely this is a definite indication that although wages or salaries paid may have some bearing on the supply of workers, yet it is not the only factor that has to be considered.

CAUSES OF TEACHER SHORTAGE:

What then are some of the other causes for the shortage of teachers?

The greatest single cause of teacher shortage in the province is undoubtedly marriage.

Following the improvement in the financial condition of the people generally, our young men discovered that they were able to get married earlier than had our young men during the Hungry Thirties. The young girls coming out of school took advantage of this opportunity, and instead of going to normal school for a period of one or two years to become qualified teachers, they preferred to take more temporary jobs pending their contemplated marriage one or two years hence.

Furthermore, opportunities presented themselves elsewhere. It required less time and cost less for girls to train as stenographers, or typists than it did to become teachers. Girls preferred to take this shorter training period while awaiting the date of their approaching marriage. Some of these other jobs paid higher salaries than were paid to the girls in the teaching profession. On the other hand however, many of these jobs paid less. Girls were quite prepared to take these smaller salaries in other jobs, and remain in the city, instead of taking higher paid salaries in the teaching profession and going out in the country. There is no question about the fact that girls preferred to take city jobs where they retained all the benefits of the companionship of their friends, as well as modern conveniences rather than take positions teaching in the country, where they were required to stay, in some places, in one-room teacherages, lacking all city conveniences, such as running water and plumbing facilities, and missing the social companionship of their friends. Lest there be some

doubt on this score let me remind the Honourable Members that the Government started paying a special bonus amounting, in some cases, to \$250.00 a year, to induce girls to teach in country schools in outlying areas. Where the girls had the choice, they preferred to teach in less isolated schools, and forgo the bonus rather than teach in these isolated schools and obtain the bonus.

Yet in order to provide modern running water and plumbing facilities in all school houses and teacherages in the province—that is in the rural areas of the province—it would require millions of dollars. I doubt if even the Alberta Educational Council would suggest that this should be attempted as a remedy.

Mr. Speaker, this aspect of the question has by no means been exhausted. I feel, however, that I have dealt with the main features sufficiently to show that one cannot provide an adequate remedy simply by making the broad all-embracing statement, that the Government should pay an arbitrary 50% of the cost of education in this Province.

PART II

I come now to the second point raised by the opposition, i.e., that the Provinces of Ontario and British Columbia are paying or propose to pay 50% of the cost of education and consequently Alberta should be able to do the same.

ENGLAND:

The Honourable Leader of the Opposition, Mr. Page, has gone even farther afield for an example. The Honourable Member stated that the British Government is paying more than 50% of the cost of education in England, and that consequently we, in Alberta, "a land flowing with milk and honey", to use the words of the Honourable Member, should be able to do every bit as well, if not better, than the British Government.

The Honourable Member has made one grave error in his comparison. The British Government has full, complete and undivided sovereign authority and power. It has the right to impose all and any kind of taxation, direct or indirect, as it may see fit. It has full authority to legislate on matters of banking, the issue of money, the use of the national credit, and it may use these powers to whatever extent it sees fit, in order to supplement its revenues from taxation.

On the other hand in Canada the Dominion Government is the only Government that enjoys all these privileges to the same extent as the British Government. The provinces do not enjoy full, complete and undivided sovereignty. Their powers are limited. In the field of taxation, the provinces can impose direct taxation on the people within the province, and nothing else. The responsibilities of the provinces however exceed by far their revenues from taxation.

The Dominion Government realized the impossible position of the provinces, and appointed a Commission, now known as the Rowell-Sirois Commission, to investigate the whole field of Dominion-Provincial relations. The object of this Commission was to endeavour to find ways and means of putting the financial relations of both the provinces and the dominion in such shape that the conditions that existed in the hungry thirties would not be repeated again in this country.

The Honourable Member's comparison therefore, should have been between the British Government and the Dominion Government, and the Honourable Member should have compared the amount spent by the British Government on education with the amount spent by the Dominion Government on education. It is a well-known fact of course that the Dominion Government contributes nothing to the provinces for the cost of education.

At the recent Dominion-Provincial conference the Honourable Premier of Alberta brought this matter to the attention of the conference for the purpose of endeavouring to obtain some assistance from the Dominion Government to help meet the cost of education in the Provinces. At a meeting of the Coordinating Committee of the Dominion-Provincial Conference held on November 26th, 1945, the Honourable the Premier made this statement:

"If we are to pay our share of the costs of adequate post-war social services, **if we are to assume a greater portion of the cost of education**, to relieve our municipalities of an excessive burden of taxation on real estate, and if we are to do our part in carrying through an adequate post-war program of public works, irrigation, and rural electrification, we must be assured of a substantially greater increase in our public revenues than that provided by the proposed per capita grant. Furthermore the Dominion's proposals for assuming and/or sharing the cost of various specific social services are too restricted in their application. **They make no provision for Dominion aid in meeting capital costs of adequate educational facilities such as Technical Institutes, Vocational Training Schools, Agricultural Colleges and Universities.**"

Later, The Honourable the Premier made certain specific proposals to the Dominion Government, the second of which was the following:

"The Dominion should make a substantial contribution towards defraying the capital costs of education."

It is a well known fact that no action was taken by the Dominion Government to meet the request made by Premier Manning for dominion aid to the provinces for education.

ONTARIO AND BRITISH COLUMBIA:

Let us now analyze the argument insofar as it relates to Ontario and British Columbia. It should not be forgotten that these two provinces are probably the wealthiest provinces in Canada and are in a position to obtain greater revenues per capita from personal income, corporation income, other corporation taxes as well as succession duties, than any other province in Canada.

ONTARIO:

The province of Ontario was settled more than 300 years ago. It rapidly developed into an industrial province, and enjoyed the profits from its industrial production. The tariff that Ontario has had the privilege of enjoying for years at the expense of the Prairie Provinces, has helped in no small measure to put the finance of Ontario in the most favourable position of that of any province of Canada. The accumulation of its population and the development of its resources over a period of

about 300 years, have enabled it to provide a network of roads throughout the province, that serves practically every community in the province.

BRITISH COLUMBIA:

As to the province of British Columbia, at the time of Confederation it was already a fairly wealthy province, with a sound financial position. Since then it is a well known fact, that many people from the Prairie Provinces, who have reached retiring age have chosen to move to British Columbia, a province whose climate is less severe than that of the prairies, bringing along with them their accumulated life earnings, and spending these life earnings in the warm climate of British Columbia. Thus, the Succession Duties that would have been paid to the Prairie Provinces, had these people remained in the Prairie Provinces, were paid to the province of British Columbia. These spent earnings instead of increasing the productive wealth of the Prairie Provinces, have benefited the business enterprises of British Columbia. This important factor along with the natural resources of the province of British Columbia has put the province of British Columbia in a unique position in Canada. That is why, at the recent Dominion-Provincial Conference, the Dominion Government submitted a special formula that would apply only to the province of British Columbia, asking that province to turn over to the Dominion, its main sources of revenue, namely; personal income tax, corporation tax and succession duties.

ALBERTA:

In contrast to these two provinces, Alberta was admitted to Confederation only in 1905, when its population was still very small.

During the years that followed thousands of settlers were brought into the province by the Dominion Government under Dominion Immigration policies. These settlers were allowed to take land in widespread isolated areas of the province thus requiring heavy expenditures on the part of the Province to provide a network of roads to serve these isolated communities as well as educational facilities and social services required by the people in these outlying areas.

Furthermore, the province has had to provide itself with administration buildings, a university, the high standard of which is recognized as second to none in Canada, as well as make provision for the many educational, health and social services required by the people generally.

In other words we have been struggling to achieve in about 60 years what Ontario has done in 300.

Despite this fact however, Alberta can well be proud of her record in the field of education. The share of the cost of education provided from the public treasury of Alberta, considering Alberta's financial position, compares very favourably with that of the Provinces of Ontario and British Columbia, and still more so with that of any other province in Canada, be they in the Prairies or in the Maritimes.

STATISTICS:

I do not wish to burden the Assembly unduly with statistics but some statistical information is necessary in order to show the extent of the financial advantages enjoyed by Ont-

ario and British Columbia before the war. The following statistical information has been taken from the statistics prepared by the Dominion Government for the purpose of the recent Dominion-Provincial Conferences.

STATEMENT OF PER CAPITA REVENUE FROM TAXATION AND EXPENDITURES ON EDUCATION SHOWING PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL REVENUES AND EXPENDITURES FOR THE YEARS 1937 AND 1939

No. 1—PROVINCE OF ONTARIO

	1937		1939	
	Revenue	Per Capita	Revenue	Per Capita
Personal Income Tax.....	\$ 6,012,000	\$ 1.65	\$ 6,510,000	\$ 1.75
Corporation Income Tax....	1,996,000	.55	3,398,000	.92
Corporation Taxes (other than Income Tax).....	6,520,000	1.79	7,105,000	1.92
Succession Duties.....	20,214,000	5.56	11,500,000	3.10
Total Above Taxes.....	\$ 34,742,000	\$ 9.55	\$ 28,513,000	\$ 7.69
Total Revenue.....	\$ 84,003,000	\$23.10	\$ 84,510,000	\$22.79
Expenditure on Education..	\$ 12,104,000	\$ 3.33	\$ 13,869,000	\$ 3.74
Total Expenditure	\$17,015,000	32.17	111,062,000	29.95
Percentage of Expenditure on Education:				
To Total Revenue.....	14.41%		18.21%	
To Total Expenditure	10.34%		12.49%	

No.2—PROVINCE OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

	1937		1939	
	Revenue	Per Capita	Revenue	Per Capita
Personal Income Tax.....	\$ 2,002,000	\$ 2.64	\$ 2,206,000	\$ 2.78
Corporation Income Tax....	1,804,000	2.38	2,370,000	2.99
Corporation Taxes (other than Income Tax).....	4,234,000	5.58	4,237,000	5.35
Succession Duties.....	1,461,000	1.92	1,423,000	1.80
Total Above Taxes.....	\$ 9,501,000	\$12.52	\$ 10,236,000	\$12.92
Total Revenue.....	\$ 28,949,000	\$36.14	\$ 30,925,000	\$38.92
Expenditure on Education..	\$ 3,735,000	\$ 4.92	\$ 3,946,000	\$ 4.98
Total Expenditure.....	33,530,000	44.18	\$ 32,891,000	41.53
Percentage of Expenditure on Education:				
To Total Revenue.....	12.90%		12.80%	
To Total Expenditure..	11.14%		12.00%	

No. 3—PROVINCE OF ALBERTA

	1937		1939	
	Revenue	Per Capita	Revenue	Per Capita
Personal Income Tax.....	\$ 660,000	\$.65	\$ 900,000	\$ 1.14
Corporation Income Tax....	330,000	.66	895,000	1.14
Corporation Taxes (other than Income Tax).....	1,532,000	1.97	1,665,000	2.12
Succession Duties.....	1,326,000	1.71	375,000	.48
Total Above Taxes.....	\$ 4,048,000	\$ 5.21	\$ 3,835,000	\$ 4.88
Total Revenue.....	\$ 16,329,000	\$21.04	\$ 17,448,000	\$22.20
Expenditure on Education..	\$ 2,802,000	\$ 3.61	\$ 3,178,000	\$ 4.04
Total Expenditure.....	20,683,000	26.65	21,742,000	27.66
Percentage of Expenditure on Education:				
To Total Revenue.....	17.16%		18.21%	
To Total Expenditure..	13.55%		14.62%	

A study of these statistics will reveal three outstanding features:

First, the per capita revenue from the main sources of direct taxation is twice as great in the Province of Ontario as in the Province of Alberta, and nearly twice as much in the

Province of British Columbia. That meant that the Province of Alberta has had to derive its revenues from sources other than these most lucrative sources of taxation, such as taxes on real estate, royalties and licenses. These figures also show to what extent the Provinces of British Columbia and Ontario are in a favoured position compared with the Province of Alberta.

Second, Alberta's per capita expenditures on education are just about on a par with the per capita expenditures of the Provinces of British Columbia and Ontario. Our per capita expenditure is a little higher than that of Ontario, and somewhat lower than that of British Columbia.

The third and most outstanding feature is the fact that the percentage of both our revenue and our expenditure devoted to education exceeds in every case that of British Columbia and Ontario. To take just the one year 1939 again, the year which saw the outbreak of war, the percentage of our total revenue spent on education was 18.21% while in Ontario it was only 16.41% and 12.80% in British Columbia. Again the percentage of our total expenditure assigned to education was 14.62% while in Ontario it was only 12.49% and 12% in the Province of British Columbia.

Surely these figures are a complete answer to those who claim that we should be spending as much on education as is spent by the Provinces of British Columbia and Ontario. In spite of the fact that we are in a less favourable financial position, than these other two provinces, in spite of the fact that we enjoy far less revenue from the main sources of direct taxation than these two other provinces, nevertheless before the war we were spending a greater portion of our revenues on education, than were either Ontario or British Columbia.

These statistics deal with pre-war years, when the provinces were still collecting taxes from individuals and corporations. It might be well to bring the information up-to-date.

The latest figures available are for the fiscal year ending March the 31st, 1946. The current fiscal year does not end for several weeks yet. In view of the fact that the Dominion Government has taken over the collection of personal income tax, corporate income tax and other taxes on corporations there is no point in giving the detailed revenues of the provinces for the fiscal year 1945-46. What is important, is to ascertain the percentage now being spent on education by different provinces in relation to their total expenditures. In addition to giving the information for the Provinces of Ontario and British Columbia the Assembly might be interested to know what the situation is in connection with the provinces of Manitoba and Saskatchewan. Here is the picture:

STATEMENT OF EXPENDITURES ON EDUCATION FOR VARIOUS PROVINCES SHOWING PERCENTAGES TO TOTAL EXPENDITURES

FOR THE FISCAL YEAR ENDED IN 1946

	British Columbia	Ontario	Manitoba	Saskatchewan	Alberta
Total Expenditure on Education..\$	5,329,000	\$ 30,779,000	\$ 2,616,000	\$ 5,390,000	\$ 4,655,000
Total Public Expenditure	\$ 38,042,000	\$126,803,000	\$ 19,461,000	\$ 38,785,000	\$ 25,079,000
Percentage: Education Expenditure to Total Exp.	14.01%	24.27%	13.44%	13.90%	18.58%

British Columbia	949,000
Ontario	4,004,000
Manitoba	736,000
Saskatchewan	845,000
Alberta	826,000

Thus it will be seen that while Ontario is spending a larger percentage on education than is Alberta, yet Alberta is far ahead not only of Saskatchewan and Manitoba, but even of British Columbia.

At the risk of imposing myself unduly on the Assembly, I think the Honourable Members would be interested in having a comparison of the amount of school grants per pupil as provided for in the budgets of the current fiscal year of the three Prairie Provinces. Here is the picture:

STATEMENT SHOWING GRANT PER PUPIL FOR THE PRAIRIE PROVINCES ON THE BASIS OF THE 1946-47 BUDGETS

(School population from last Dominion census—1941)

Province	School Grants	School Population	Grant per Pupil
Alberta.....	\$3,700,000	\$162,151	\$22.82
Saskatchewan.....	3,805,000	162,039	19.81
Manitoba.....	Less than 2,000,000	137,638	Less than 15.00

These figures, of course, do not mean that Alberta is doing enough for education. On the contrary more can be done and more is being done. We have already pointed out that in this budget we have increased school grants alone 40% over last year, and we have increased the total expenditures for the Department of Education Income Account and Capital Account \$2,470,929.00 over the amount provided in our last budget.

These figures do show however that Alberta can well be proud of her achievement not only in the field of health and social services, but also in the field of education.

The fact that the people of Alberta have done so well in 60 years, speaks well for the calibre of the people who have settled in and developed this province, and the zeal and ingenuity demonstrated by these people is undoubtedly responsible for the contention now made, by a certain section of the population, that the Province can well afford to do what the province of Ontario and the province of British Columbia are seeking to do, namely, to pay 50% of the cost of education in this province.

We can well ask ourselves however: How far can we go, in the light of our present economy, in providing additional aid for education? Has the government exercised the best possible judgment in allocating the public revenues of the province between the different public services provided by the Province? This leads us to the third part of our discussion.

PART III

In the booklet already referred to entitled "Your Child Has Only One Childhood" published by the Alberta Educational Council we find the following statement dealing with the Rowell-Sirois Report and its discussion on education.

"They explained that the people want to be provided with health services, farm services, good roads, universities, hospitals and all sorts of benefits, of which the school system is only one. Among all these services, there is and must be strong competition for the people's support; and there is no good reason why special Constitutional provision should be made to take care of the schools rather than the roads or hospitals or pedigree bulls."

This brings us to the very crux of the problem in so far as Alberta is concerned. In the light of our financial position, we have to consider three important questions:

1. Are we doing too little for education, and too much for other services such as roads, health, social services, etc.?
2. In the field of education itself, are we spending too little on elementary and secondary education, and too much on our technical and University education?
3. Instead of cancelling the Social Service Tax should the Government retain this tax, and use the full proceeds for school grants? As an alternative should the Government levy some additional tax to raise the additional funds necessary to pay half the cost of education in this Province?

Without an intelligent study of these three important questions, including all their ramifications no one is in a position to state intelligently that the Government is doing too little or too much for education.

Expenditure on Education and Other Public Services

Let us take the first question: Has the Government in its present budget provided too little for education and too much for other services, such as roads, health and social services?

It has been suggested by some Honourable Members, including the Honourable member from Calgary, Mr. Davison, that the Government should spend more on education, and less on roads.

On hearing this request I could not fail to recall the statement made by the Honourable leader of the Opposition, in his budget address, when he warned us in referring to the Government's increased revenues to not "fool ourselves". The Honourable Member pointed out that the Government should not count on receiving the same amount of revenues in the future, and that consequently we should guard against too great an increase in our fixed expenditures.

This timely warning was heeded by the Government even before the Honourable leader of the Opposition had spoken. In his budget address the Honourable the Premier called attention to this very fact when he stated:

"It should be recognized, however, that the appropriations for Capital Expenditures are the only major appropriations in which there remains a reasonable degree

of flexibility. The greatly increased appropriations on Income Account, in the main represent fixed expenditures necessary to maintain essential public services at the present prevailing standards, and which, therefore, cannot be reduced either now or in the future without curtailing the services at present provided. . . .

"While the fixed charges, represented by expenditures on Income Account in this transition Budget, are near to the maximum which the Province can safely undertake with the sources of revenue at present available, the substantially increased appropriations on Capital Account provide the margin of flexibility which the Government considers necessary to protect the people of the Province from the hardship that otherwise would result in future years if declining revenues necessitated a curtailment of services or a substantial increase in provincial taxation, or both. Furthermore we are not, at this time, in a position to gauge fully the expenditures which the Province shortly may be required to bear in connection with the Dominion Government's proposed Social Security programme. In the matter of the National Health Insurance proposals alone if the present programme is adopted the Province will be required to provide an amount in excess of \$8,000,000 a year as its share of the cost and to enable it to take full advantage of the Dominion contributions. The situation with respect to this and other probable expenditures in the field of Social Service and Public Investment undoubtedly will be clarified during the ensuing year. By retaining a reasonable degree of flexibility in the Budget at this time the Legislature will be in a position at future sessions to re-assess the entire picture, and, in the light of the circumstances as they then exist, to reallocate those revenues with respect to which we are endeavoring to retain flexibility during this transition period."

Having thus taken full cognizance of the seriousness of increasing too much the fixed charges in the budget for the current fiscal year the government felt it would be dangerous to increase its fixed charges for education beyond \$2,000,000.

It must not be forgotten that expenditures for roads are flexible expenditures. They can be increased or decreased as the revenues of the Province fluctuate. But any expenditures provided for education are fixed expenditures, and cannot fluctuate as easily as can expenditures on roads, without causing a great deal of interruption in the entire educational set up of the Province.

Before dealing with other services, the members might be interested to know how the fixed charges of the government are apportioned between departments in the present budget.

Department of Education.....	\$7,373,114.00	23.2%
Public Debt Service Charges.....	5,808,000.00	18.5%
Department of Health.....	4,509,635.00	14.4%
Department of Public Works.....	4,039,023.00	12.0%
Department of Public Welfare.....	3,457,534.00	11.1%
Lands and Mines Department.....	1,238,996.00	4.0%
Treasury Department.....	1,171,730.00	3.7%
Attorney General's Department.....	987,145.00	3.2%
Department of Agriculture.....	889,613.00	2.8%
All others	1,829,876.00	6.2%

It will be seen from this information that the amount voted for the Department of Education exceeds by far the amount voted for any other Department. Furthermore, the fixed charges for education have been increased this year by \$2,000,000. Of this, \$1,500,000 or 75% of the increase has been reserved for school grants alone.

In his Budget Address, the Honourable the Premier gave to the assembly a statement showing the increased expenditures provided for education by the Government since 1935-1936. It might be well to repeat these figures for the information of the house.

Year	Grant to Schools	Grants to University	Total Expenditures Education Dept. (Income Acct.)
1935-36.....	\$1,451,080	\$399,650	\$2,428,011
1938-39.....	1,663,766	412,147	2,671,342
1941-42.....	2,163,114	450,000	3,302,330
1944-45.....	2,717,699	602,500	4,072,402
1945-46.....	3,087,620	746,000	4,654,763
1946-47.....	3,700,000*	825,000	5,372,341
1947-48.....	5,200,000*	972,340	7,373,114

*Estimates

How do these figures compare with the expenditures for public health and social services? Have we since taking office 12 years ago spent too much on health and social services as compared with education? Let us take a look at the figures.

Information re Estimates for 1947-48 as compared with actual Net Expenditures 1935-36.

Number and Name of Appropriation	Amount 1947-48	Amount 1935-36	Amount Increase
603—Hospital Grants.....	\$ 859,645.00	\$ 460,201.00	\$ 399,444.00
604—Cen. Alberta San. and T.B. Hospitalization.....	614,345.00	177,936.00	436,409.00
610—Social Hygiene.....	45,795.00	17,840.00	27,955.00
612—Mental Hygiene.....	1,556,050.00	108,691.00	1,447,350.00
631—Polio.....	25,745.00	Nil	25,745.00
633—Cancer.....	142,950.00	Nil	142,950.00
637—Maternity Hospitalization	697,860.00	Nil	697,860.00
641—Health Units.....	108,600.00	Nil	108,600.00
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
	\$3,786,242.00	\$ 764,668.00	\$1,835,963.00

Following are the figures dealing with the chief items for the Department of Public Welfare.

Department of Public Welfare Net Estimates 1947-48 as compared with Actual Net Expenditures 1935-36.

	1947-48	1935-36	Increase
1612—Old Age Pensions	\$1,707,725.00	\$ 365,347.00	\$1,342,378.00
1613—Mothers' Allowance	496,000.00	319,069.00	176,931.00
Child Welfare.....	133,670.00	63,654.00	70,016.00
1616—Hospitalization of Pen- sioners and Recipients of Mothers' Allowance	503,500.00	Nil	503,500.00
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
	\$2,840,895.00	\$ 748,070.00	\$2,092,825.00

We are spending on these services, some of which have been inaugurated since this government took office, a total of \$4,000,000 more than in the fiscal year 1935-36. Should we have spent less on these services and more for education? I challenge those who advocate so strongly that the Government should pay 50% of the cost of education in this Province, to tell the people of Alberta which of the above services should be cancelled and the funds allotted thereto turned over to the Department of Education.

Analysis of Department of Education Estimates:

Let me now deal with the second question, namely: whether we are spending too little on elementary and secondary education, and too much on our technical and university education.

I have already pointed out that the total ordinary expenditures on Income Account provided for the Department of Education amounted this year to \$7,373,114. Last year the amount provided was \$5,372,341 an increase of \$2,773,000. This represents a 40% increase over the estimates for 1946-47.

I have already pointed out also that the total increase for grants this year, is \$1,500,000. Thus the balance of the net increase in the Department of Education Income Account is \$500,773.

This increase is accounted for in several votes in the Estimates, and I ask anyone to point out the increase in any particular item in the estimates that should have been eliminated and transferred to the appropriation for school grants.

Here are the various votes:

Vote 304 has been increased from \$200 to \$45,000 an increase of \$44,800. The object of this vote is to provide assistance to teachers in training. In view of the teacher shortage in the Province, surely no one will question the advisability of increasing this vote, in order to relieve the teacher shortage in the Province.

Vote No. 305, has been increased from \$825,600 to \$972,300, an increase of roughly \$146,700. This amount represents the annual grant to the University of Alberta. We are faced with a very serious problem at the university this year, due to the fact that during the war years, very few male students entered the University. They preferred to enlist to serve their country. With the war over these young men are now seeking to complete their university training with the result that we have found ourselves short of buildings, short of the necessary staff and short of the necessary equipment. Surely no one will condemn this increase, in order to provide these young men with the training that they had to sacrifice during the war period.

Vote No. 312 for the Institute of Technology in Calgary has been increased from \$117,000 to \$165,000, or a net increase of \$37,400. The Institute of Technology is in the same position as the university. If it is to do its job properly and satisfy the increased number of students seeking training it must be provided with additional staff and equipment. As a matter of fact the greater part of this increase is for part time instructors to assist in the training of the students returning from the Armed Services.

Vote No. 325, Education of Children of Deceased and Disabled Servicemen. This is a new service provided this year, at a cost of \$10,490. Last year there was no appropriation for this item. Surely no one will question the advisability of assisting the children of those who have died in serving their country, or have become disabled through war service, to obtain an adequate education.

There have been other increases in various items of the Department of Education, but in not one single instance has there been any criticism of any of these particular increases. Nor has any recommendation been made that any of the services now being given should be eliminated. This certainly would tend to indicate that the funds allotted to the Department of Education are being well spent for useful and necessary purposes.

In addition to the increased amounts provided in the Income Account however, there has been an increase in the capital account of the Department of Education of \$410,000. This increase is due entirely for the purpose of providing the extra accommodation required at the University of Alberta. Furthermore, it is a capital expenditure and not a recurrent expenditure. Were we to consider transferring this \$410,000 from the construction of necessary buildings at the university to the Department of Education to increase school grants, we have no assurance that we could continue this amount every year. Thus our position would only be worse, because of the disruption it would cause and the revision required in school grants.

It must therefore be obvious to anyone who takes the trouble of checking closely into the appropriations of the Department of Education, that the best use possible is being made of the funds available, and that it would be impossible to increase school grants beyond the additional \$1,500,000 already provided without disrupting seriously some other service provided for by the Department. No one has yet suggested that this should be done and consequently it is logical to assume that everything is in order.

Education and the Tax Structure:

I now come to the third question, namely, instead of cancelling the Social Service Tax, should the Government retain this tax, and turn the proceeds over to the schools in the form of school grants? or, as an alternative, should the Government levy some additional tax to raise the additional funds necessary, to pay half the cost of education in this Province?

I wonder what the situation would be however, if instead of having dropped the tax, the Government had decided to retain this tax, and pay all the funds collected therefrom to the schools in the form of school grants. I venture to suggest that not even the school trustees or the Alberta Educational Council would advocate such a move.

As a matter of fact by dropping the Social Service Tax the Government has put the School Divisions and the Municipalities in a position where they have the sole and exclusive right to impose taxation on land for whatever purposes they see fit.

Consequently the amount of the tax dropped by the Government can well be picked up by the Municipalities and the School Divisions if they see fit to do so for the purpose of education.

No one has yet suggested that the government should retain the Social Service Tax, and turn the proceeds over to the Department of Education. Nor has anyone suggested any other tax, that should be imposed by the Government to provide more funds for school grants. And yet without additional taxation where is the Government going to get funds to provide these increased school grants?

Let me recall to the members an incident that occurred some time ago.

Seven years back the executive of the Union of the Alberta Municipalities, an association consisting of the towns, villages and cities of the province, met the cabinet and recommended to the cabinet that the Government should impose a 2% sales tax in the province, and use the proceeds for education in the province. The cabinet asked the executive if they had the approval of their association in this request. The executive advised the cabinet that the matter had not yet been submitted to the association. We pointed out to the executive, that there was a convention coming up in a few weeks, and that it might be well to submit the proposition to the convention in order to ascertain the views of the members of the organization.

I had the privilege of attending the convention when the proposal was submitted to the convention by the executive. I well remember the discussion that took place on that occasion. The final result of the discussion was, the convention turned down the recommendation of their own executive on this matter thus giving no indication to the Government, that the villages, towns and cities in the province, were prepared to support a 2% sales tax—or any other tax—for the purpose of raising funds for education in the province.

During the course of the recent Dominion-Provincial Conference, the Province of Alberta submitted to the conference a proposal for an amendment to the British North America Act, to enable the provinces to impose an indirect sales tax. As a matter of fact this was the only proposal made throughout the conference that received the unanimous approval of all the provinces and the Dominion Government. Later on however, the Dominion Government changed its mind, and instead of agreeing to a specific amendment to The British North America Act, it requested the provinces to agree to a general amendment whereby the Dominion could delegate powers to the provinces and the provinces could delegate powers to the Dominion. Under such an amendment the Dominion stated, it could delegate to the provinces powers to impose an Indirect Sales Tax.

This suggested amendment by the Dominion was rejected most emphatically by two or three of the provinces. We from Alberta felt it would not meet our situation because should the Dominion see fit at any time to withdraw its approval to the imposition by the Province of an Indirect Sales Tax, the Province might find itself in a very embarrassing position due to the loss of revenues it would thereby incur, and would consequently have to curtail some of the services it had instituted.

Had the Dominion agreed to an amendment to The British North America Act that would have enabled the provinces to impose an indirect sales tax, it may well be that from such a tax the Province of Alberta could obtain sufficient revenues to pay even more than half the cost of education in the province.

The Speech from the Throne contains an announcement that the Government proposes to establish a committee or a commission to make a survey of the tax structure of the Province. It may well be that as a result of the work of this commission the Government may find itself in a position to impose some new tax that will enable it to increase still further its grants for education. It will be interesting to note during the course of the work of the commission, if the imposition of any new form of tax for education will meet the general approval of the public. Yet without additional funds from some source, the Government cannot provide more than it has already done towards defraying the cost of education in the Province, unless it reduces some of the other services it is now providing.

CONCLUSION

Mr. Speaker, it has taken considerable time to deal with the main aspects of this important question. It is very easy and it only takes a few seconds to make the bold statement that the Government should pay 50% of the cost of education in the Province. A full and complete answer however takes time.

I trust that I have given sufficient information to show that were the Government to pay 50% of the cost of education, this would not solve the immediate educational problems in the Province. What then can or should be done?

I am not a teacher and I do not pretend to speak as an expert on educational matters. Consequently I have no doubt that some of the suggestions I propose to make will be severely attacked by those directly connected with education. Surely it is not too much, however, to ask those who will criticize my proposals to offer better suggestions. This should not be too difficult. If these suggestions can stimulate sufficient thought that will result in better proposals being instituted I shall consider my suggestions well worth while. If the present condition is not good enough—and no one will venture to maintain it is—then it is our duty to endeavour to find the best means possible of providing at least some temporary measure of relief.

Undoubtedly the ideal teaching staff of the Province should consist mainly of male teachers, that is of people who have entered the teaching profession as their life's work. In order to achieve this objective, however, it would be necessary to pay rural teachers a minimum salary of at least \$2,000.00 a year in order to make the profession attractive. Obviously the economy of the Province of Alberta cannot afford, at least at the present time, the luxury of a teaching staff consisting mainly of male teachers.

The alternative, therefore, is to continue to staff the schools with girls who are seeking temporary employment, while awaiting marriage. Girls who would be prepared to go to Normal School for a period of say one year, and then teach for two or three or five years. This undoubtedly would provide a large turnover in teachers every year. This turnover is not in the best interests of education, but at the same time it would go a long way to help to meet the present teacher shortage. Should we not consider what is currently being done for the nursing profession, that is lower temporarily the qualifications required for teachers in order to induce more girls to enter the profession. To those who

would cry out that we would thus be lowering the teaching standard in the province I would point out that the vast majority of our teachers to-day have obtained their teachers' certificates before the present high standard was set and they are doing a pretty good job with our children. Why could not the high school girls of to-day do as well with the same training?

Furthermore is it fair to provide top notch teachers for some children while others have no teachers at all? Is it better to have a few highly trained teachers in the Correspondence Branch of the Department of Education, providing "mail box" education to some children, or would it be better to have some good average teachers training children in the classroom?

There is another proposal that might well merit some consideration. Where we have a school without a teacher could not the trustees of the School Division arrange to have the teachers in an adjoining school alternate between the two schools? Of course this is not an ideal situation either for the children or the teacher, but then again we have to face the question, is it better for all the children to have a teacher for say five months of the year, or is it better to have some children receive the benefits of a teacher for ten months and other children not to see a teacher at all?

These questions are raised as a challenge, particularly to the school trustees and the teachers in this province. They are the ones charged with the responsibility of providing our children with the highest standard of education we are able to give them. I ask that these questions be not brushed aside lightly, but if found impractical, that other more practical measures be proposed and adopted.

Mr. Speaker, I have already mentioned that as the result of the survey of the tax structure of the province, we may be able to obtain more revenues to increase still further the services provided by the Government. This is where the members of the Legislature can render valuable service to the Government. The members are in closer touch with the people than is the individual Cabinet Minister. They are in a position to know what services should receive priority in the allocation of public funds and to make recommendations to the Government accordingly. In making these recommendations the members should always keep in mind the general economy and the financial resources of the provinces. I can find no better words to convey this warning to the members than those used by Premier Manning in his Budget Address when he stated:

"It should be borne in mind by the honourable members and the public generally that merely establishing new and higher levels of expenditure for education and other essential social services is insufficient to assure the best interests and the future well-being of our people. It is of equal importance that due consideration be given to the financial capacity of the province to sustain each advance after it is made and preserve our economy from the disastrous consequences of recessions in years when our revenues may easily fall far below what they are at the present time."

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